Grand opening of nationwide DSCI Cyber Security Awareness Campaign launched by Hon'ble IT Minister of Maharashtra

- A month-long nationwide cyber security awareness drive kicked off for citizens across India.
- The multistakeholder campaign will sensitize citizens on everyday cyber safety while raising awareness against rising AI-enabled frauds and cybercrimes.
- Grand opening ceremony hosted at the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) through the symbolic IPO bell to 'Ring the Bell for Security'.

Mumbai, 1 October 2026: The Data Security Council of India (DSCI) today launched 'Be Cyber Street Smart', its nationwide cyber security awareness campaign for Cyber Security Awareness Month 2026. The month-long campaign was formally launched at the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) by Shri Ashish Shelar, Hon'ble Minister for Information Technology, Government of Maharashtra in the presence of senior leaders from BSE, SEBI, Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) and the Maharashtra Cyber department.

October is globally observed as Cyber Security Awareness Month (CSAM). To mark the launch, the dignitaries drew on the time-honored 'Ring the Bell' tradition at the BSE, ringing the bell as a shared commitment by government and industry to a safer cyberspace. The ceremony also featured the launch of the campaign's Cyber Anthem.

The campaign is supported by government bodies including CERT-In, the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) under the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and Maharashtra Government, and by industry partners 63SATS, Axis Bank, Chitkara University, CRED, HDFC Bank, IIFL Finance, Lloyds Technology Centre, PayPal, Protectt.ai, Punjab National Bank, QRC Assurance, QuilrAI, SQ1 Security, Target, Thales, Veeam and ZS Associates, along with BSE and BSECCL.

The 2026 campaign reimagines Kathputli, India's traditional string-puppet storytelling art, for the digital age. Just as Kathputlis have long carried folk wisdom from one generation to the next, 'Be Cyber Street Smart' uses familiar, culturally rooted storytelling to make cyber safety easy to understand, remember and share.

Through October, the campaign will help citizens build safe habits across mobile app safety, email security, social media safety and digital payments. It addresses the fraud typologies affecting Indians most directly today, including malicious APK frauds, AI voice-cloning emergency scams, real-time deepfakes, new-age "digital arrest" scams, AI-powered fraud and other emerging threats.

Campaign content will reach citizens through a suite of easy-to-share awareness formats, each drawing on a familiar Indian idiom such as Screensavers Manch, Poster Chaupal, Scams decoded through infographics, Cyber Kathas, stickers, Cyber Pathshala ki Kitaab and more.

All awareness material and artefacts will be available at: https://www.dsci.in/cyber-security-awareness-month-2026/

Shri Ashish Shelar, Hon'ble Minister for Information Technology, Government of Maharashtra, said, *"As more citizens across our cities, towns and villages come online, they are increasingly exposed to new forms of cybercrime, making digital awareness and digital sanitization more important than ever. Awareness is a firewall that can help protect people from future cybercrimes. From pensioners and investors to schoolchildren attending online classes, mothers using digital devices and the growing community of esports players, everyone needs to understand the precautions required to stay safe online. DSCI's multistakeholder Cyber Security Awareness Month campaign is exactly the kind of collective effort we need. By taking simple, relatable safety messages to every citizen, 'Be Cyber Street Smart' will help build the everyday awareness needed to keep families, businesses and communities safe. The theme of 'Kathputlis' carries a powerful message on the importance of cyber protection, and I hope this campaign becomes one of the biggest cyber awareness campaigns in the country. The Government of Maharashtra remains committed to working with industry to strengthen our collective cyber resilience."*

Shri Brijesh Singh, Principal Secretary (Information & Public Relations), Government of Maharashtra, said, *"Cyber threats are evolving rapidly, with bad actors using sophisticated technology and AI to target citizens. To counter this, technical defense alone isn't enough; we need every individual to be vigilant. Initiatives like DSCI's Cyber Security Awareness Month and the 'Be Cyber Street Smart' campaign play a critical role in demystifying digital threats and empowering people with actionable, common-sense security habits. Protecting our digital ecosystem requires strong collaboration between all concerned. By staying informed, cautious, and cyber street smart, every citizen can contribute to building a safer and more resilient digital India."*

Shri Vinayak Godse, CEO, DSCI, said, *"Digital adoption has transformed how Indians transact, communicate and access services, but the same connectivity is being exploited by adversaries who are now using AI to make fraud faster, more convincing and harder to detect. As threats like deepfakes, voice cloning and APK scams grow, end-user awareness is a cornerstone of defense. With 'Be Cyber Street Smart', we have deliberately reimagined a traditional Indian storytelling form so that cyber safety reaches every citizen in a language and idiom they recognize. Cyber safety is a shared, everyday responsibility, and I thank the government and our industry partners for coming together to carry this message across the country."*



Lamp lighting at the 'Ring the Bell for Security' ceremony at BSE, Mumbai



Guest of Honour Shri Ashish Shelar, Hon'ble Minister for Information Technology, Government of Maharashtra

About DSCI

Data Security Council of India (DSCI), set up by Nasscom, is a not-for-profit industry body and think tank on data protection, cyber security, and critical technologies in India. DSCI is committed to making cyberspace safe, secure, and privacy-assured, and to advancing critical technologies vital for national security – through policy advocacy, thought leadership, capacity building, and outreach initiatives. DSCI engages with the government, regulators, defence, law enforcement agencies, embassies, industry members, and academia to position India as a leader in the global digital ecosystem. For more information, visit: www.dsci.in

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